

Stress Management

COURSE CODE: B23PY01SE

Skill Enhancement Course

Undergraduate Programme in Psychology

Self Learning Material



SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

Vision

To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

Stress Management
Course Code: B23PY01SE
Semester - III

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Undergraduate Programme in Psychology
Self Learning Material
(With Model Question Paper Sets)



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STRESS MANAGEMENT

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Semester- III

Skill Enhancement Course

Undergraduate Programme in Psychology

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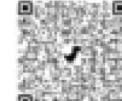
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MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The courses offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed “blended format,” a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

The university aims to offer you an engaging and thought-provoking educational journey. The undergraduate programme in Psychology is designed to match the high standards of top universities across the country. We have included the most up-to-date methods for teaching psychological concepts and ideas in our curriculum. This approach helps spark learners' interest and encourages them to go deeper into the subject. Our courses cover both theories and real-world examples, giving the learner a well-rounded understanding of psychology. The Self-Learning Material has been meticulously crafted, incorporating relevant examples to facilitate better comprehension.

Rest assured, the university's student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.

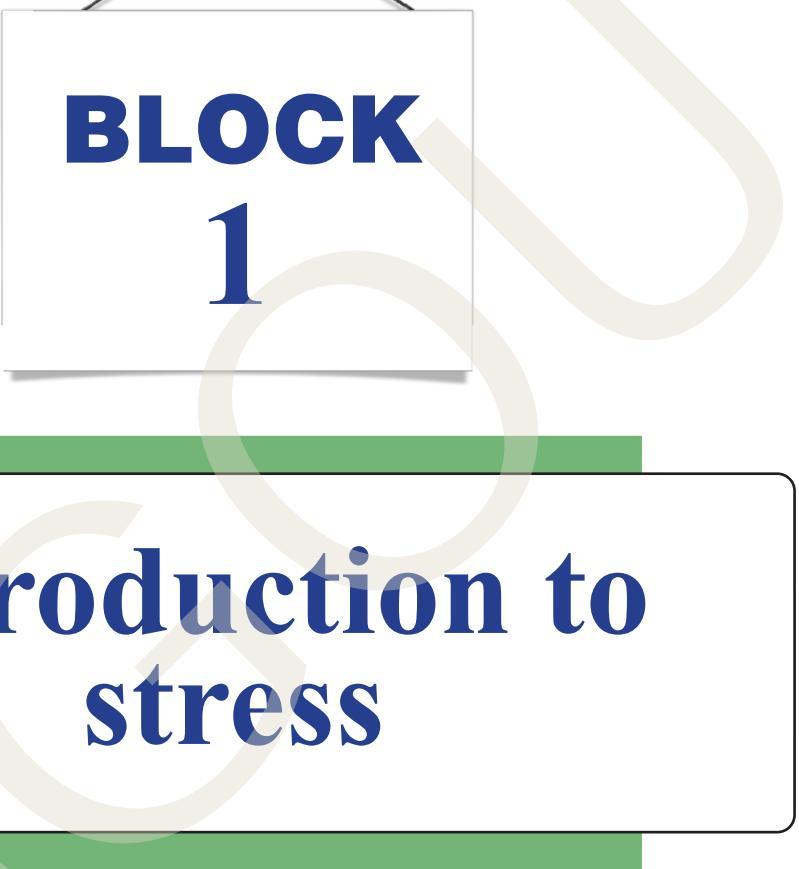


Warm regards.
Dr. Jagathy Raj V. P.

01-06-2025

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BLOCK
1

Introduction to stress



Unit 1

Stress and Stressors

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ define stress
- ◆ describe the nature of stress
- ◆ discuss stressors
- ◆ identify and explain different types of stressors

Background

Have you ever felt your heart race before entering an exam hall? Or noticed a tight knot in your stomach while awaiting important news? Perhaps you've experienced the mental strain of balancing work, home, and personal expectations—all at once. Whether it's a student preparing for results, a parent multitasking through life, a commuter caught in gridlock, or someone sitting anxiously in a doctor's office, these moments may seem ordinary, yet they all share a deeper, invisible force: stress.

But what exactly is stress? Why does it occur in some moments and not in others? Why can the same situation feel manageable to one person but overwhelming to another? In this unit, you'll begin exploring the concept of stress by understanding its definition, examining its essential nature, and identifying the various sources that trigger it. Stress can arise from our environment, our thoughts, our social world, or even cultural expectations. By looking closely at these elements, you'll begin to see stress not just as a feeling, but as a complex process that connects deeply with how we live, think, and relate to the world.

Keywords

Stress, Cognitive appraisal, General Adaptation Syndrome, Acute stress, Chronic stress, Eustress, Distress and Acculturative stress.

Discussion

1.1.1 Defining Stress

Stress is a word we often use in our day-to-day conversations—sometimes to describe a minor annoyance and other times to express intense emotion. We say we are stressed when caught in traffic, facing a tight deadline, or dealing with relationship issues. It is a complex and multi-dimensional concept that has been defined in various ways by researchers across the discipline.

Let us explore how prominent researchers define stress.

Imagine you're walking in a forest when suddenly, a wild animal crosses your path. Your heart begins to race, muscles tighten, and your breathing quickens—all without you consciously thinking about it. This automatic set of bodily responses is your body's way of preparing to either confront or escape a potential threat. Such instinctive, generalised physiological reactions are what early researchers began to study under the umbrella of stress.

One of the first scientists to systematically explore this phenomenon was Hans Selye, who is known as the father of stress research. He defined stress as “the nonspecific response of the body to external demands” (1936). By nonspecific response, Selye meant that regardless of what causes the stress—whether it's physical danger, emotional strain, or mental pressure—the body reacts with the same general pattern of physiological changes. Initially, Selye viewed stress primarily as a stimulus and focused on the external environmental factors that triggered these bodily changes. However, by the 1950s, Selye revised his viewpoint. He began to emphasize that stress should be understood not just in terms of external triggers, but also as the organism's response to those demands. This shift highlighted the role of internal biological processes in the experience of stress and laid the groundwork for future physiological models of stress. Selye's concept of stress was later challenged on two main grounds: first, his idea of nonspecificity—the claim that all stressors elicit the same or similar physiological response; and second, his limited attention to the psychological dimensions of stress.

Imagine two friends walking into a job interview. One feels excited and confident, the other panics and feels overwhelmed. The situation is the same, but the reactions are different. Why? Because how we interpret the situation matters.



Another researcher, Richard Lazarus (1966), proposed that stress arises from the dynamic interaction between a person and their environment—interactions he referred to as ‘transactions’. His perspective, known as the transactional approach to stress, views stress not merely as a stimulus or a response, but as a process involving cognitive, behavioural, and psychological components. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined stress as the physiological, psychological, behavioural, and emotional responses of an organism to external demands perceived as taxing or exceeding their coping capacity. This definition underscores that our experience of stress is largely determined by how we evaluate the situation, a process known as cognitive appraisal. Cognitive appraisal involves two key dimensions: first, determining whether the situation is perceived as threatening or demanding, and second, assessing whether an individual has the resources to cope with the demands. When sufficient resources are believed to be available to manage the situation, it is less likely to produce stress. However, if an individual perceives their resources as inadequate to handle a threatening or challenging situation, they are more likely to experience stress.

According to Lazarus and Folkman, cognitive appraisal involves two key processes: the ‘primary appraisal’ and ‘secondary appraisal’. Primary appraisal is the first step in the cognitive appraisal process, where an individual evaluates a situation to understand what it means to them. It involves asking questions such as: What does this mean to me? Is this situation harmful, threatening, or challenging? This stage is subjective, meaning that different people can interpret the same situation in very different ways based on their perceptions.

For example, consider the situation of losing a job. One individual may interpret this event as a challenge, viewing it as an opportunity to explore better career options, learn new skills, or pursue a more fulfilling path. On the other hand, another person might appraise the same job loss as a threat, worrying about financial instability, the well-being of their family, or the fear of not finding another job. This illustrates how primary appraisal is not about the event itself, but about how the event is perceived by the individual. In secondary appraisal, the individual evaluates whether the resources available are sufficient to meet the demands of the situation. If a person believes they have adequate resources, they may experience little or no stress. However, if they perceive their resources as insufficient to cope with the demands, they are likely to experience a great deal of stress. In the job loss example, if the person believes they have enough resources—like strong skills to get another job—they are likely to experience little stress. Lazarus also introduced a third type of appraisal called reappraisal, which refers to the ongoing process of reassessing a situation as new information becomes available. Reappraisal does not always lead to increased stress; in fact, it can often reduce stress by offering a more balanced or hopeful perspective.

1.1.2 Nature of Stress

Stress produces a wide range of physiological changes within the organism. When confronted with a challenging or threatening situation, the body initiates a set of automatic reactions known as the fight-or-flight response- first described by American physiologist Walter Cannon, one of the pioneers in stress research. This response prepares the organism to either confront or escape the threat, and these immediate responses are essential

for survival. However, if stress persists over time, the body progresses through three stages—alarm, resistance, and exhaustion—as outlined by Hans Selye (1956) in his General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) model. Prolonged or chronic stress can overwhelm the body's natural defences, making the organism more vulnerable to illnesses such as ulcers, high blood pressure, and other stress-related health problems. The physiological mechanisms underlying the fight-or-flight response and the stages of stress adaptation will be discussed in detail in the next unit. Stress also has a strong impact on the psychological realm. Prolonged and intense stress can impair cognitive functioning. This can lead to difficulties in memory, concentration, and decision-making. A wide range of emotions can accompany stressful experiences, including fear, anxiety, irritability, and aggression. Stress can originate from internal psychological factors as well as from external sources.

Stress can vary significantly in its intensity and duration. Acute stress refers to short-term stress that arises in response to immediate perceived threats or challenges. For instance, feeling nervous just before your turn in a job interview is an example of acute stress. Although it may cause temporary discomfort, moderate levels of acute stress can sometimes boost alertness and motivation, which may enhance performance in some situations. However, if the stress response is triggered by a traumatic event—such as witnessing a serious accident—and the symptoms are intense and persist beyond a few days, it may develop into a more serious condition known as Acute Stress Disorder. On the other hand, chronic stress is long-lasting and can have more severe effects on an individual's physical and psychological well-being. It usually results from ongoing or intense life situations, such as the loss of a job, the death of a loved one, or exposure to catastrophic events like natural disasters or terrorist attacks. Because it continues over an extended period, chronic stress can overwhelm the body's coping mechanisms and contribute to serious health issues, including cardiovascular disease, depression, and anxiety disorders.

While stress is often viewed negatively, it is important to understand that not all stress is harmful. Stress can differ not only in terms of duration—but also in terms of its emotional and motivational impact. The renowned stress researcher Hans Selye introduced the term eustress. Eustress is the type of stress that results from positive or desirable life events. Examples include preparing for an important performance, starting a new job, or celebrating a major life milestone like marriage. While such events may be challenging, they are typically experienced as exciting, motivating, and energizing. Eustress helps individuals stay focused, build resilience, and pursue goals. It is usually short-term and supports healthy adaptation and performance. Distress, on the other hand, is linked to unpleasant or threatening situations such as losing a job, experiencing illness, or going through the loss of a loved one. This form of stress can lead to feelings of anxiety, sadness, helplessness, and exhaustion. If prolonged or intense, distress may impair emotional functioning and physical health, reducing an individual's ability to cope effectively. The difference between eustress and distress is clearly shown in the table below.

Table 1.1.1 : Difference between eustress and distress



Aspect	Eustress	Distress
Type	Positive Stress	Negative Stress
Causes	Positive or desirable life events	Unpleasant or threatening situations
Examples	Starting a new job, marriage, or public performance	Job loss, illness, loss of a loved one

1.1.3 Types of Stressors

Stress can arise from almost anywhere — from sudden, large-scale events to daily personal challenges. Consider the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, when many Americans reported experiencing severe and prolonged stress. Events like these show how environmental catastrophes can trigger intense psychological stress. On a more personal level, stress can emerge from life situations that involve difficult decisions or internal conflicts. Imagine being offered a prestigious job opportunity that requires you to compromise on important family matters. Such a conflict can create significant emotional strain. Likewise, consider the stress of racing to meet an important deadline with only half the work completed, or the shock of unexpectedly losing a job without warning. Whether they are major life events, everyday pressures, internal dilemmas, or external social challenges, all these different experiences share a common thread — they are sources of stress.

The factors that contribute to the experience of stress are known as stressors. A stressor can be defined as any external or internal demand, situation, or condition that has the potential to trigger a stress response. In the following sections, we will explore different types of stressors, including environmental, psychological, social, cognitive, and cultural sources of stress.

Stressors can be broadly classified into :

1. Environmental Stressors

- i. Catastrophes
- ii. Major life changes
- iii. Hassles

2. Psychological Stressors

- i. Pressure
- ii. Uncontrollability
- iii. Frustration

iv. Conflict

3. Social Factors

i. Poverty

ii. Job stress

4. Personality Factors

i. Type A and Type B

5. Cultural Factors

6. Cognitive Factors

1.1.3.1 Environmental Stressors

Imagine someone waking up to a flooded home after a cyclone - dealing with damage, displacement, and fear. Or think about someone dealing with the day-to-day stress of commuting through heavy traffic every morning. Both are examples of environmental stressors, which are external pressures that demand psychological or physical adjustment. Environmental stressors are external factors that place pressure on an individual and demand some form of adjustment or coping. These stressors can range from minor, everyday events such as getting stuck in traffic to major life incidents like the death of a loved one or large-scale catastrophic events. Broadly, environmental stressors can be classified into three categories: catastrophes, major life changes, and daily hassles. Let us now explore each of these categories in detail.

1. Catastrophes

Imagine being trapped in a building during an earthquake, witnessing destruction and fearing for your life. Events like these—sudden and large-scale—are categorized as catastrophes.

Catastrophes are sudden, large-scale disasters that cause significant damage, loss, or destruction. They can result from natural events such as floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes, or from human-made events like wars and terrorist attacks. These major incidents create a profound sense of threat and can lead to overwhelming levels of stress among those affected. The loss of lives, property, and a sense of insecurity often results in intense emotional reactions such as grief and fear. A major mental health concern commonly associated with exposure to such catastrophic events is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which can develop in both victims and survivors.

2. Major life changes

Stress may not always arise from catastrophic events alone. In everyday life, major life changes such as the death of a loved one or losing a job can also serve as significant sources of stress, requiring substantial psychological adjustment. Interestingly, not only negative life incidents but also positive changes, such as getting married or starting college,



can produce stress because they demand adaptation and coping with new circumstances.

Recognizing the impact of life changes, Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe (1967) developed a self-assessment tool known as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) to measure the stress associated with various life events. They proposed that any life event requiring an individual to change, adjust, or adapt could be a potential source of stress. The SRRS includes a list of 43 events, ranging from major incidents like the death of a spouse to minor events such as minor violations of the law. Respondents are asked to report which events they have experienced over a specified period, and the stress scores for those events are summed to calculate an overall stress score. Holmes and Rahe suggested that higher SRRS scores are linked to greater vulnerability to illness and accidents. Later, Miller and Rahe revised the SRRS and found that the overall stress associated with many of the listed events had increased by up to 45%. Additionally, major life events often lead to an increase in daily hassles, which can further accumulate stress over time.

3. Daily Hassles

Stress can also arise from minor, everyday events such as getting stuck in heavy traffic on the way to work, forgetting your keys, or experiencing a long wait in a grocery store. These routine occurrences demand psychological adjustment and can produce feelings of stress, irritation, and annoyance. Such minor but frequent stressors are referred to as daily hassles. Although they may seem insignificant individually, daily hassles can accumulate and significantly contribute to overall stress levels. Furthermore, major life events often give rise to daily hassles, and together they can greatly intensify stress in an individual's life.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) recognized the importance of these everyday irritations and developed the Hassles Scale to measure the stress they produce. This scale includes 117 items, ranging from minor inconveniences such as making silly mistakes to more serious concerns like not having enough money for food. Respondents are asked to rate each item based on the degree of distress it causes, using a three-point scale: somewhat, moderately, or extremely stressful.

1.1.3.2 Psychological Stressors

In addition to environmental sources, stress can also emerge from internal psychological processes. Psychological stress can arise even in the absence of external challenges. Consider a student who, despite having ample time, feels intense anxiety about meeting academic expectations. This internal tension is often more draining than physical challenges.

Psychological stressors are internal processes that create mental pressure, including uncontrollability, frustration, and conflict. These factors are highly subjective—what is stressful for one person might not be stressful for another—and depend heavily on personal interpretation.

1. Pressure

Pressure refers to the psychological experience when a person feels forced to speed

up, intensify, or change their behaviour to meet a specific expectation, standard, or goal. Pressure is a significant form of stress, as it challenges a person's ability to perform well, often causing tension, anxiety, and emotional strain.

Pressure often comes from external sources, such as deadlines, competition, or demands from others. However, people can also impose internal pressure on themselves by setting unrealistically high standards.

When pressure becomes too intense or prolonged, it can impair decision-making, lower performance, and even lead to frustration, burnout, or physical symptoms like headaches and sleep disturbances. Thus, pressure acts as a powerful stressor, affecting emotional, cognitive, and physical functioning.

2. Uncontrollability

A person's sense or degree of control over a stressful event or situation determines his or her experience of stress. Psychological researchers have shown that those who have more control over a stressful situation experience less psychological distress or physical arousal than those who have 'uncontrollability' over that situation. When people perceive that they cannot influence the outcome of events—whether in their work, relationships, health or other areas—they often experience higher levels of stress.

3. Frustration

Frustration arises when people feel hampered or restricted from achieving their goals and meeting their needs. Frustration can be either external or internal. For instance, frustration can occur when a person gets stuck in traffic, causing a delay in reaching an important job interview. This frustration is triggered by external circumstances. Internal frustration arises when obstacles to achieving a goal come from within the individual rather than from the external environment. It often stems from personal limitations such as lack of skills or physical challenges or conflicts within oneself.

Obviously, some frustrations are minor or less serious, while others are more severe. A student who misses a bus on the way to meet friends for a casual hangout will feel mildly frustrated. In contrast, a student who misses the bus on the way to an important final exam will experience much deeper frustration because the goal is far more important to them.

4. Conflict

Conflict arises when a person is torn between two or more choices, desires, or goals that cannot be satisfied at the same time. This internal struggle creates tension and stress, as the individual must decide which path to follow while letting go of the other. Conflicts can take different forms, most commonly categorised as approach-approach, avoidance-avoidance, approach-avoidance and double approach-avoidance conflicts. Let us now explore each of these in detail.

i. Approach-Approach Conflict

Approach-approach conflict arises when an individual is faced with two desirable or



attractive goals and must choose one while leaving the other behind. In other words, it occurs when a person must select one appealing option from two incompatible choices. Since both options are desirable, the stress associated with this type of conflict is often experienced as eustress, as the individual is excited to make a decision, even though they must turn down the other option. For example, a person may receive job offers from two well-known companies, both offering an attractive salary package, and must choose one while losing the other. Typically, this type of conflict is easier to resolve and does not cause severe stress, as it is often seen as a win-win situation.

ii. Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict

This type of conflict occurs when a person must decide between two undesirable alternatives. It often results in significant stress because neither option is appealing. For example, imagine someone facing the choice of either quitting a job they dislike, which could lead to financial insecurity and uncertainty or staying in a job with a toxic work environment, which may cause ongoing emotional distress. Both options are unappealing, creating a great deal of internal tension. This type of conflict, often described as "between the devil and the deep blue sea," is generally more difficult to resolve, as both choices involve considerable drawbacks.

iii. Approach-Avoidance Conflict

This type of conflict differs from the previous two, as it involves a single goal that triggers both a strong desire to approach and a strong urge to avoid. The goal presents both positive and negative outcomes. For example, a person is offered a long-desired job that promises great career growth, but accepting it would mean leaving his family behind. While the job offers significant career advancement, the emotional strain of being away from his family creates a considerable amount of stress, making this conflict particularly difficult to resolve.

iv. Double Approach-Avoidance Conflict

Double approach-avoidance conflict arises when an individual is faced with two or more options, and each option has both attractive (approach) and unattractive (avoidance) elements. In this situation, the person experiences ambivalence toward both choices, making the decision process highly stressful and complex. The conflict is intensified because moving toward either goal involves dealing with both positive and negative consequences, leading to indecision, hesitation, and emotional discomfort.

For example, a person may have to choose between two job offers, each with its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Job A offers a high salary, which is highly appealing, but requires relocation far from home, making it less desirable. On the other hand, Job B allows the person to stay close to their family but comes with a lower salary and limited opportunities for career advancement. This situation creates a double approach-avoidance conflict, as both options involve benefits that attract the individual and drawbacks that cause hesitation. This type of conflict is more difficult to resolve than simple approach-approach or avoidance-avoidance conflicts due to the presence of dual pros and cons in each alternative.

1.1.3.3 Social factors

Stress does not arise only from personal experiences or internal thoughts; it is also deeply influenced by the social environment in which a person lives. Social factors such as relationships, economic conditions, workplace environments, and cultural pressures can significantly contribute to stress. Social stressors are powerful because they often persist over long periods and are difficult to control. Two major social factors that have been widely studied as sources of stress are poverty and job stress.

1. Poverty

Poverty is a major social stressor that arises from the lack of resources to meet basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing. It creates chronic stress by causing insecurity, helplessness, and emotional strain. Poverty increases vulnerability to health problems and psychological issues such as anxiety and depression. It is also viewed as one of the reasons for violence and substance abuse.

2. Job stress

Even when individuals have stable jobs and earn an adequate salary, the workplace itself can be a significant source of stress. Common sources of job-related stress include a heavy workload, limited control over decision-making, long working hours, poor physical working conditions, and experiences of discrimination such as racism and sexism. Job insecurity is another major contributor to workplace stress.

The effects of job stress are similar to those caused by other sources of stress. Physical symptoms include headaches, high blood pressure, digestive problems, and general fatigue. Psychological symptoms can range from anxiety and irritability to anger, depression, and feelings of helplessness. Behavioural symptoms may include unhealthy coping strategies such as overeating, substance abuse, and difficulties within family relationships. Chronic job stress can severely impact both physical health and emotional well-being.

1.1.3.4 Personality Factors

Personality traits significantly influence how individuals perceive, react to, and cope with stress. Some personality patterns make people more vulnerable to stress and its negative effects on physical and mental health. Research suggests that individuals with certain traits, such as hostility, anxiety, and tension, are more likely to experience high stress levels and related health issues. Among the most widely studied personality patterns in relation to stress are Type A and Type B behaviour patterns.

1. Type A Behaviour Pattern

People with a Type A behaviour pattern are typically characterized by an intense sense of time urgency, high competitiveness, and frequent hostility. They tend to be highly ambitious and driven, often feeling pressured to achieve more in less time. Studies have shown that individuals with a Type A behaviour pattern react more intensely to stressors than those with a Type B behaviour pattern. Notably, recent research indicates that the hostility component of Type A behaviour pattern is particularly associated with



an increased risk of developing coronary heart disease.

2. Type B behaviour Pattern

In contrast, individuals with a Type B behaviour pattern tend to be more relaxed, patient, and easy-going. They show lower levels of competitiveness and time urgency and are generally less reactive to stressful situations. As a result, they are less likely to suffer from stress-related health problems compared to those with a Type A behaviour pattern.

1.1.3.5 Cognitive factors

Cognitive factors play a crucial role in how individuals experience and respond to stress. The way we think, interpret, and appraise situations can significantly influence the level of stress we feel. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress is not merely a reaction to external events, but rather a result of how those events are cognitively appraised—whether they are perceived as threats, challenges, or manageable situations. For example, consider Naina, a college student who views an upcoming exam as an opportunity to prove her ability. She feels motivated and focused. In contrast, her friend Anil views the same exam as a threat to his future, imagining failure and rejection. As a result, Anil experiences heightened anxiety and is unable to study effectively. This example shows how different cognitive appraisals can lead to different stress responses. Moreover, chronic stress can impair cognition by affecting areas of the brain responsible for memory, attention, and decision-making. Over time, individuals may struggle with concentration, forgetfulness, and poor judgment, making it harder to cope with stressful situations. Thus, negative thinking can fuel stress, and persistent stress can further weaken cognitive abilities, creating a challenging cycle.

1.1.3.6 Cultural Factors

Living in a foreign country can be a rewarding experience, but it often comes with significant psychological and emotional challenges. Individuals who relocate to new cultural settings—such as immigrants, refugees, or international students—are commonly faced with the task of adjusting to unfamiliar values, social norms, lifestyles, and languages. This process of cultural adjustment can be highly stressful and is referred to as acculturative stress.

Acculturative stress arises from the demands of adapting to a new cultural environment. It includes difficulties such as communication barriers, discrimination, social isolation, unfamiliar educational or workplace systems, and the conflict between maintaining one's original cultural identity while trying to fit into the host culture. These challenges can cause confusion, anxiety, and a sense of loss or disconnection, especially in the early stages of migration. Research suggests that the severity of acculturative stress may vary depending on several factors such as the individual's willingness to adapt, the level of social support available, and the degree of difference between the original and new cultures. For example, individuals who actively engage in learning the new language, build social relationships in the host culture, and adopt new practices tend to experience lower levels of stress. Additionally, inclusive policies and community support in the host country can ease the transition and improve mental well-being.

Stressed Out: Why Gen Z and Young Millennials Are Feeling the Pressure

Recent findings from the American Psychological Association and related research reveal that younger generations—especially Gen Z (ages 18–26) and younger millennials (ages 27–34)—are experiencing record-high stress levels. Financial insecurity is a major contributor: over 80% of young adults say money is a significant source of stress, with many struggling with personal debt and unaffordable housing. More than 30% of Gen Z adults report housing instability, and a similar proportion carry heavy debt burdens. This financial pressure is compounded by emotional challenges—nearly 60% report feelings of depression and over half experience low motivation. Workplace loneliness is another rising concern, with around 45% of young workers feeling socially isolated on the job. Alarmingly, only about half of Gen Z adults believe they are effectively managing their stress. These insights highlight a growing mental health crisis among younger adults, pointing to an urgent need for targeted support, accessible therapy, and better coping strategies.

Recap

- ◆ Hans Selye defined stress as the body's nonspecific response to demands.
- ◆ He first saw stress as a stimulus, later as a response.
- ◆ His theory was criticised for ignoring psychological factors.
- ◆ Richard Lazarus viewed stress as a person-environment interaction.
- ◆ Stress depends on how a person interprets a situation.
- ◆ Primary appraisal is judging if a situation is harmful or challenging.
- ◆ Secondary appraisal is judging if one can cope with it.
- ◆ Reappraisal is re-evaluating the situation with new information.
- ◆ Stress affects the body, mind, and social life.
- ◆ Prolonged stress can lead to health problems.
- ◆ It can reduce memory, focus, and emotional control.
- ◆ Stress can arise from various factors, including internal thoughts and external environmental conditions.
- ◆ Stress may be acute or chronic.



- ◆ Acute stress is a brief and immediate reaction to a short term challenge or threat.
- ◆ Chronic stress is long-lasting and harmful.
- ◆ Selye also defined eustress as positive stress.
- ◆ Stressors are events that cause stress.
- ◆ Environmental stressors include catastrophes major life events and daily hassles.
- ◆ Psychological stressors include conflict, frustration and pressure.
- ◆ Poverty and job issues are social stressors.
- ◆ Personality affects how people handle stress.
- ◆ Type A people are competitive, impatient and easily stressed.
- ◆ Cultural changes can also increase stress.

Objective Questions

1. Who first defined stress as the nonspecific response of the body to external demands?
2. What term did Hans Selye use to describe positive stress?
3. What is the first stage of General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) by Hans Selye?
4. What approach to stress was introduced by Richard Lazarus?
5. What term did Lazarus use to describe the interaction between the person and the environment?
6. What is the process called when an individual evaluates whether a situation is threatening or challenging?
7. What is the term for the process of reassessing a situation as new information becomes available?
8. According to Lazarus and Folkman, what process determines how stressful an event is?
9. What are the three stages in Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)?

10. What type of stress is caused by major life changes like the death of a loved one or a natural disaster?
11. Who is known as the father of stress research?
12. Which type of conflict involves choosing between two desirable options?
13. What kind of stressor is caused by events like floods, earthquakes, or terrorist attacks?
14. What term refers to minor everyday irritations such as traffic jams or losing your keys?
15. Which personality type is more prone to stress-related health problems, especially heart disease?
16. What kind of stress arises from adjusting to a new culture?
17. What is it called when someone feels blocked from achieving their goals or desires?
18. Which factor influences stress based on the individual's belief in their control over a situation?
19. What type of stress is short-term and usually occurs in response to an immediate challenge?
20. Which type of personality is characterised by relaxed, easy-going and patient?

Answers

1. Hans Selye
2. Eustress
3. Alarm Stage
4. Transactional approach
5. Transactions
6. Primary appraisal





7. Reappraisal
8. Cognitive appraisal
9. Alarm, Resistance, Exhaustion
10. Chronic stress
11. Hans Selye
12. Approach-approach conflict
13. Catastrophes
14. Daily hassles
15. Type A personality
16. Acculturative stress
17. Frustration
18. Uncontrollability
19. Acute stress
20. Type B

Assignments

1. Explain Hans Selye's concept of stress. How did his definition evolve over time, and what criticisms did it receive?
2. Describe the transactional model of stress proposed by Lazarus and Folkman. How does it differ from earlier models of stress?
3. Discuss the concept of cognitive appraisal in stress. Explain the processes of primary, secondary, and reappraisal with examples.
4. Differentiate between acute stress, chronic stress, eustress, and distress. Provide examples of each.

5. Identify and explain different types of stressors. How do environmental, psychological, social, cultural, and cognitive factors contribute to stress?
6. How do personality traits influence the experience of stress? Discuss with reference to Type A and Type B behaviour patterns.
7. Explain the role of uncontrollability, conflict, frustration, and pressure as psychological stressors. How do they affect mental and emotional health?

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Unit 2

Responding to Stress

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ describe the emotional responses associated with stress
- ◆ explain the physiology of stress
- ◆ explain the fight or flight response and GAS
- ◆ describe the behavioural effects of stress
- ◆ discuss the relationship between stress and physical health

Background

You are walking alone at night and suddenly hear fast footsteps behind you in a quiet alley. Instantly, your heart begins to race, your breathing becomes rapid, your muscles tense, and your palms start to sweat. Emotionally, you may feel a surge of fear or anxiety. Your mind quickly begins to assess the situation—Should I run? Should I look back? Am I in danger? You might speed up your pace, call someone, or look for a safe place nearby.

This common situation reflects how stress can trigger a complex and automatic response in our body and mind. The emotional reaction of fear or anxiety, the physiological changes such as increased heart rate and muscle tension, and the behavioural actions like running or calling for help all work together to prepare you to deal with a perceived threat. These are part of our natural response to stress, which has evolved as a survival mechanism.

In the following unit, we will explore these different types of stress responses—how they arise, what systems in the body are involved, and how prolonged stress can affect our health and behaviour.

Keywords

Phobia, Depression, Physiological change, Reactivity, Allostatic Load, General Adaptation Syndrome, Catecholamines, Psychoneuroimmunology.

Discussion

Stress can affect individuals in multiple ways, going beyond just physical symptoms. While many people notice the bodily changes that come with stress—like a racing heart or tense muscles—stress also deeply influences an individual's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. It is a complex response that involves the entire body and mind. When a person is under continuous pressure or facing demanding situations, these effects begin to show in various aspects of their life. Therefore, understanding the full impact of stress means looking at more than just the physical signs—it requires us to also consider how it shapes one's feelings, thinking patterns, and actions.

In this unit, we are discussing the emotional, physiological, and behavioural responses to stress in detail.

1.2.1 Emotional Response

Stress can produce a wide range of emotional reactions. Fear, anxiety, sadness, and anger are some among them. Consider the following situation:

You're walking through a dimly lit parking lot late at night and hear footsteps approaching quickly from behind. If you believe the person might pose a threat, your emotional response is likely fear or anxiety, and your body reacts with increased heart rate, shallow breathing, and heightened alertness—you may even quicken your pace or prepare to defend yourself. But if you turn and realize it's a security guard doing rounds, your fear dissipates and may be replaced by relief or a sense of safety. Again, your appraisal of the situation determines your stress response. You experienced fear in the first situation because your interpretation of the situation was one of a threat. Both the stress and the emotional experience can be influenced by the cognitive appraisal processes.

Fear is a natural emotional response that involves both psychological uneasiness and physical arousal when we sense danger. Psychologists often group fears into two main types: phobias and anxiety. Phobias are intense, irrational fears connected to particular situations or things, like someone having an extreme fear of heights, known as acrophobia. Anxiety, on the other hand, is a more general feeling of worry or dread. It usually doesn't have a clear cause, and the person might not fully understand what is making them feel anxious or what exactly they are afraid will happen. For instance, a person might feel anxious before attending a job interview, worrying about their performance or the impression they might make.



Stress may also give rise to emotions such as sadness or lead to symptoms of depression. Everyone experiences sadness occasionally, and it is a natural part of life. We often describe ourselves as feeling "depressed" whenever we are feeling sad. However, depression is entirely different from a mere feeling of sadness. Depression is a mental health condition marked by persistent sadness and low energy. People with depression often feel tired, lose interest in daily activities, and experience changes in sleep and appetite. They may also feel hopeless, and in severe cases, have thoughts of suicide.

Anger is a common emotional reaction that often arises in response to stress, particularly when an individual feels blocked from achieving a goal or perceives an injustice or threat. It typically involves feelings of irritation, frustration, or rage, and is usually accompanied by physiological arousal such as increased heart rate, muscle tension, and heightened alertness. Anger can serve as a motivating force to overcome obstacles, but when chronic or intense, it can contribute to health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, and weakened immune functioning.

Chronic work stress is a common source of emotional responses like anger. When employees face constant pressure and unrealistic demands, they may feel overwhelmed and frustrated, often leading to irritability and angry outbursts. So far, we have explored the emotional responses to stress. Now, let's examine what occurs within the body during stressful experiences—specifically, the physiological changes that prepare the body to respond to perceived threats.

1.2.2 Physiological Responses

Have you ever felt your stomach clench, your hands tremble, or your heart race during a stressful situation? These sensations are part of your body's automatic response to stress. Whether the threat is real or imagined, the body quickly shifts into a state of heightened arousal to help you respond effectively, and the sympathetic nervous system and the endocrine system cause this arousal to happen. Once the threat has passed, this arousal gradually diminishes.

To understand what happens inside the body during stress and how it affects our physical health, it's important to look at how the nervous system—especially the brain—works together with two other key systems: the endocrine system and the immune system. We begin by looking at how the endocrine system helps the body respond to stress. Then, we explore how stress can affect the immune system and our ability to stay healthy.

1.2.2.1 Fight or Flight Response – Walter Cannon

Many years ago, the well-known physiologist Walter Cannon (1932) offered one of the earliest explanations of how the body responds during emergency situations. According to Cannon, when you face an immediate danger or threat, your body automatically initiates a rapid series of changes known as the fight-or-flight response. This built-in reaction is designed to help you either confront the threat or quickly get away from it. The fight-or-flight response involves the activation of both the sympathetic nervous system and the endocrine system.

When your brain detects a threat, the hypothalamus—a key regulatory centre—alerts the sympathetic nervous system to respond. This triggers the adrenal medulla, a part

of the adrenal glands, to release stress hormones known as catecholamines, primarily adrenaline and noradrenaline. These hormones circulate through the bloodstream and bring about rapid physical changes such as an increased heart rate, quicker breathing, and tightened muscles, all of which help prepare your body to confront or escape the threat.

The fight-or-flight response is an essential survival mechanism that prepares the body to respond quickly to immediate threats. For instance, if someone encounters a stray aggressive dog while walking alone, this response activates, increasing heart rate, sharpening focus, and mobilising energy, enabling the person to either defend themselves or flee to safety. However, when an individual is exposed to a persistent or unavoidable threat, the high level of arousal triggered by the fight-or-flight response may continue over an extended period. According to Cannon, this prolonged activation can have detrimental effects on physical health, as the body remains in a heightened state of stress for too long.

1.2.2.2 General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) - Hans Selye

Walter Cannon's idea that long-term stress could harm the body was supported by the research of Canadian endocrinologist Hans Selye. Selye did most of his early experiments on rats, exposing them to ongoing stress like electric shocks, extreme temperatures, or forced exercise. Through his research, Selye discovered that the fight-or-flight response is merely the first stage in a sequence of physiological reactions the body undergoes when exposed to prolonged stress.

He called these series of physiological reactions the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). The GAS consists of three stages: "Alarm reaction, the stage of resistance, and the stage of exhaustion."

i. Alarm Stage:

The alarm stage is the body's initial reaction to a stressful situation. During this stage, intense arousal occurs as the body mobilizes internal physical resources to meet the demand of the stress-producing event. This is the body's immediate reaction to a stressor, triggering the fight-or-flight response. In the alarm stage of stress, the body experiences quick changes due to the release of hormones (catecholamines) from the adrenal medulla, similar to what Cannon described.

ii. Resistance Stage:

If the stress continues, the body enters the resistance stage. It tries to cope and adapt to the ongoing stressor. Although the outward signs of stress may seem to reduce, internal resources are still being used, and the body remains on high alert. This phase can last for a longer period, but the body's resistance gradually declines.

iii. Exhaustion Stage:

When stress persists for too long and the body's resources are depleted, it enters the exhaustion stage. The individual may experience fatigue, burnout, illness, or decreased stress tolerance. This stage reflects the breakdown of the body's ability to resist and adapt to stress. Figure 1 illustrates the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS).



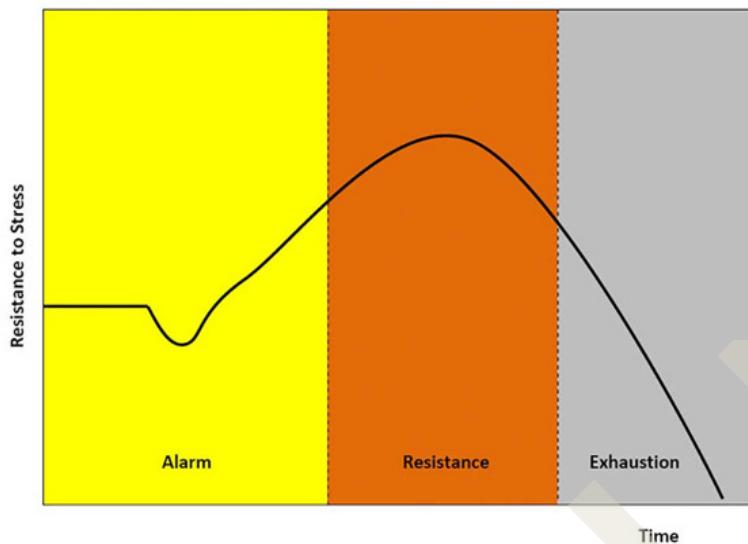


Figure 1.2.1 : The General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)

Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) model, while foundational in understanding physiological responses to stress, has been subject to several important criticisms. Firstly, it places a limited emphasis on psychological factors, particularly overlooking the role of cognitive appraisal in determining how individuals perceive and react to stress. Modern psychology highlights that how a person evaluates a stressor—whether it is seen as a threat or a challenge—greatly influences the stress response. Secondly, Selye suggested that the body reacts to all stressors in a nonspecific way. However, later research indicates that different types of stressors can trigger different physiological and emotional responses.

1.2.2.3 Brain-Body Factors

Selye (1956, 1976) discovered that prolonged stress triggers a second endocrine pathway involving the hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and adrenal cortex, and this is known as the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis. When a stressor is encountered, the hypothalamus responds to the stressor by releasing corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH), which signals the anterior pituitary gland to produce adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH). The ACTH then stimulates the adrenal cortex to release hormones called glucocorticoids, the most important of which is cortisol. Cortisol, often called the “stress hormone,” helps mobilize energy by increasing glucose in the bloodstream, enhancing brain’s use of glucose, and making substances that repair tissues more available. It also suppresses non-essential functions like digestion, reproduction, and immune responses to conserve energy for dealing with the immediate threat.

The body’s stress response helps us adapt to threatening situations by preparing us to take action. This process of keeping the body balanced and ready under changing conditions is called allostasis. It means the body adjusts its activity levels depending on what’s happening around us. When we’re calm, the parasympathetic nervous system helps the body relax and return to a normal state. But when there’s a threat or emergency, the sympathetic nervous system quickly activates to help us deal with it. This system works well when the stress is short-term. For example, physical activity briefly activates

the sympathetic system and can actually be good for our health. But if the body stays in this "alert" state for too long, it creates allostatic load, which is the physical "wear and tear" from prolonged stress.

Too much allostatic load can cause health issues like poor control of cortisol, high blood pressure, problems with blood sugar, fat buildup in the body, and even memory and cognitive problems over time. In simple terms, while short-term stress can be helpful, long-term stress can harm the body if it doesn't get a chance to rest and recover.

An essential regulatory mechanism within the HPA axis is the negative feedback hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, once cortisol levels in the bloodstream reach a sufficient concentration, they exert an inhibitory effect on both the hypothalamus and the anterior pituitary gland. This feedback loop reduces the further release of corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH) and adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH), thereby preventing excessive or prolonged cortisol secretion. This self-regulating process is crucial for maintaining hormonal balance and protecting the body from the damaging effects of chronic stress exposure.

Overall, the sympathetic-adrenomedullary system (SAM) and hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) systems together provide comprehensive coverage in the body's response to stress—SAM triggers immediate responses through adrenaline, while HPA supports longer-lasting responses via cortisol. These systems, involving both the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system, work in coordination to prepare the body to effectively handle environmental challenges.

1.2.2.4 Stress and the Immune System

It is often observed that people under prolonged stress—such as during exams or after job loss—tend to fall sick more easily. They may catch colds more frequently or experience delayed recovery from wounds. This is not merely a coincidence. Scientific research confirms that stress weakens the immune system, making the body more susceptible to illness.

While the endocrine system is a major player in the stress response, another critical system affected by stress is the immune system—the body's defence mechanism against infections and diseases. When a person experiences stress, especially over a long period, the body continuously releases stress hormones such as cortisol. Although cortisol has anti-inflammatory properties and helps the body manage acute stress, prolonged exposure to high levels of cortisol suppresses immune function. It reduces the production of lymphocytes (white blood cells) and impairs the body's ability to fight off pathogens. Thus, chronic stress doesn't just affect mood or energy—it can significantly lower resistance to disease, making individuals more vulnerable to infections, delayed healing, and even worsening of existing health conditions. This connection between psychological stress and immune response is a key focus in the field of psychoneuroimmunology.

1.2.3 Behavioural Response

Up to this point, we have examined the body's physiological responses to stress



through systems like the SAM and HPA axes. Now, let us turn to how these physiological changes influence our mental processes and behaviour, highlighting the psychological effects of stress.

1.2.3.1 Cognition and Stress

Many students can relate to the experience of struggling to recall answers during a stressful exam. Despite having studied the material, they might misunderstand questions or temporarily forget the correct response—only to remember it after the test ends. This often happens because high stress levels can disrupt memory and concentration. High levels of stress can significantly impair cognitive functioning, particularly attention, memory, and problem-solving abilities. Stress affects cognition in two primary ways. First, preoccupation with negative thoughts—such as worries about failure—can interfere with the ability to focus and recall information. Second, stress can act as a distraction, pulling attention away from the task at hand.

For example, environmental stressors like prolonged exposure to loud noise can disrupt concentration and mental processing. Stressful experiences also impair executive functioning, which includes planning, decision-making, and cognitive flexibility. As a result, individuals under stress often experience difficulties with concentration, memory lapses, and reduced problem-solving capacity. This depletion of cognitive resources can, in turn, make it harder to manage or resolve the stressful situation, thereby creating a vicious cycle—stress impairs cognition, and impaired cognition hinders effective coping, which further amplifies stress.

1.2.3.2 Stress and Aggressive Behaviour

Research indicates that stress can trigger aggressive behaviour, with negative emotional effects often persisting even after the stressful event has subsided. Stress-related aggression can have serious real-life consequences, such as escalating interpersonal conflicts and potentially undermining the quality and stability of marital relationships. One of the biological mechanisms linking stress to aggression involves the activation of the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis and the subsequent release of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. These hormones heighten physiological arousal, reduce emotional regulation, and may increase impulsive or hostile reactions.

Psychological frameworks such as the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis suggest that when individuals are unable to cope with stressors or achieve desired goals, the resulting frustration can manifest as aggression. Similarly, the General Aggression Model (GAM) explains how situational factors like stress interact with personal variables to influence affective states, arousal, and cognitive appraisal processes, which in turn increase the likelihood of aggressive behaviour. Empirical studies support these models, showing that individuals under chronic stress or acute stress exposure demonstrate higher aggression levels in both laboratory and real-life settings.

1.2.3.3 Behavioural Effects

Stress can affect our behaviour by leading us to eat less nutritious food. It may also increase the use of stimulants like caffeine and result in excessive consumption of

cigarettes, alcohol, or other drugs. Some of the typical behavioural effects of stress seen are disrupted sleep patterns, increased absenteeism, and reduced work performance. These are considered direct effects of stress on daily functioning.

1.2.3.4 Stress and Physical Health

In addition to weakening the immune system, long-term stress can harm overall physical health. It puts extra strain on the body and increases the risk of illnesses like heart disease, high blood pressure, and stomach problems. In the following section, we will look at some common physical disorders linked to stress.

1. Headache:

Stress is a well-established trigger for both tension-type headaches and migraines. Tension headaches are often associated with chronic muscle contraction in the head and neck region, linked to psychological stress. Migraines may be worsened by stress due to neurovascular changes and alterations in serotonin levels.

2. Cardiovascular Disease (CVD):

Chronic stress has a significant impact on heart health. It contributes to hypertension (high blood pressure), increases heart rate, and promotes inflammatory responses, all of which are risk factors for coronary artery disease. Stress also influences behaviours like smoking, poor diet, and physical inactivity, which further increase the risk of cardiovascular problems.

3. Infectious Diseases:

Stress can impair immune function, making individuals more susceptible to infections such as colds, flu, and even slower wound healing. Studies have shown that people experiencing chronic stress produce fewer immune cells and antibodies, leading to weakened immune defence.

4. Diabetes:

Stress affects blood glucose regulation through hormonal pathways. Stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline promote glucose release into the bloodstream, which can worsen glycaemic control in individuals with diabetes. Additionally, stress-related behaviours such as overeating or poor medication adherence can contribute to the development and progression of diabetes.

5. Asthma:

Psychological stress can exacerbate asthma symptoms by triggering inflammation and bronchoconstriction. Stress does not directly cause asthma but can act as a precipitating factor in acute attacks or worsen existing respiratory conditions.

6. Cancer:

Although stress does not directly cause cancer, it may influence the course of the disease. Stress-related suppression of immune surveillance could affect the body's ability



to detect and destroy malignant cells. Moreover, stress can indirectly contribute to cancer risk through poor health behaviours such as smoking and alcohol consumption.

1.2.3.5 Stress and Psychological Disorders

Apart from affecting physical health, stress also plays a major role in mental well-being. Long-term stress can lead to psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, and other emotional disorders. These conditions often arise when stress becomes overwhelming and coping resources are exhausted.

1. Depression

Chronic stress is a major contributor to the onset of depression. It can lead to feelings of hopelessness, low self-worth, and lack of motivation. Stressful life events—such as job loss, interpersonal conflicts, or major life changes—can trigger depressive episodes, especially in individuals with a genetic or psychological vulnerability. Prolonged exposure to stress also disrupts the balance of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, which are essential for mood regulation.

2. Anxiety Disorders

Stress and anxiety are closely intertwined. Stressful experiences can heighten physiological arousal, trigger excessive worry, and cause constant nervousness. Individuals under chronic stress may develop generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, or phobias. Stressful environments and cognitive misappraisal of threats often contribute to a persistent state of anxiety.

3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD can develop after exposure to a traumatic event such as violence, serious accidents, or natural disasters. Not everyone exposed to trauma develops PTSD, but high levels of stress before or during the event can increase vulnerability. Symptoms include intrusive memories, nightmares, hypervigilance, emotional numbness, and avoidance behaviours. The body's heightened stress response and impaired processing of traumatic memories play a central role in this disorder.

Did You Know?

Laughter is a natural stress reliever!

When you laugh, your body releases feel-good chemicals called endorphins and reduces the level of stress hormones like cortisol. Even anticipating laughter (like watching a comedy or being with funny friends) can lower your stress response and improve blood flow. In fact, some hospitals now include laughter therapy as part of wellness programs to help patients heal faster!

Recap

- ◆ Stress affects both physical and mental health.
- ◆ It can cause emotions like fear, sadness, anxiety, and anger.
- ◆ Emotional reactions depend on how we appraise a stressful situation.
- ◆ Phobias are irrational fears of specific objects or situations.
- ◆ Anxiety is a general sense of uneasiness without a clear cause.
- ◆ Depression involves long-lasting sadness and low energy.
- ◆ Anger under stress can harm health if it becomes chronic.
- ◆ The body reacts to stress through physiological changes like increased heart rate.
- ◆ The fight-or-flight response prepares the body for emergencies.
- ◆ The General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) explains how the body reacts to long-term stress.
- ◆ The HPA axis helps the body deal with long-term stress by releasing cortisol.
- ◆ Cortisol gives energy during stress but weakens the immune system if overproduced.
- ◆ Allostasis keeps the body stable under stress, but too much leads to allostatic load.
- ◆ Stress reduces immunity, making people more prone to illness.
- ◆ Chronic stress can impair memory, concentration, and decision-making.
- ◆ Stress may lead to aggressive behaviour and poor relationships.
- ◆ It can cause unhealthy habits like smoking, poor eating, and substance use.
- ◆ Stress is linked to health problems like headaches, heart disease, and diabetes.
- ◆ Stress also contributes to mental disorders like depression, anxiety, and PTSD.
- ◆ Learning to manage stress helps protect one's health and well-being.



Objective Questions

1. Which hormone is commonly known as the "stress hormone"?
2. Which system is activated during the fight-or-flight response?
3. Who proposed the General Adaptation Syndrome?
4. Which emotion is triggered when a situation is appraised as threatening?
5. Which gland releases ACTH during stress?
6. Which part of the nervous system calms the body after stress?
7. Which immune cells are suppressed during chronic stress?
8. What is the term for the body's wear and tear due to prolonged stress?
9. Which brain structure signals the stress response to begin?
10. Which psychological disorder involves intrusive memories and hypervigilance?
11. Who proposed the concept of the fight-or-flight response?
12. Which hormone is released by the adrenal medulla?
13. Name the disorder characterized by persistent sadness and fatigue?
14. Which stage in GAS involves adaptation to ongoing stress?
15. What is the last stage of the General Adaptation Syndrome, where the body becomes weak due to long-term stress?
16. What kind of fear is irrational and specific, like acrophobia?
17. What neurotransmitter imbalance is linked to depression?
18. Which term refers to the body's ability to adjust to changing conditions?
19. Which disease can be worsened by stress-related glucose spikes?
20. What emotion is often triggered by blocked goals or perceived injustice?

Answers

1. Cortisol
2. Sympathetic
3. Selye
4. Fear
5. Pituitary
6. Parasympathetic
7. Lymphocytes
8. Allostatic Load
9. Hypothalamus
10. PTSD
11. Walter Cannon
12. Adrenaline
13. Depression
14. Resistance
15. Stage of exhaustion
16. Phobia
17. Serotonin
18. Homeostasis
19. Diabetes
20. Anger



Assignments

1. Explain the emotional, physiological, and behavioural responses to stress with suitable examples.
2. Describe Walter Cannon's Fight-or-Flight response and Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) in detail. How do these models explain the body's reaction to stress?
3. Discuss the role of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis in the stress response. How does prolonged activation affect physical and mental health?
4. How does chronic stress impact the immune system? Discuss the link between stress and illness with reference to psychoneuroimmunology.
5. Evaluate the behavioural consequences of stress, focusing on cognitive functioning, lifestyle choices, and aggressive behaviours.
6. Analyse the relationship between stress and physical disorders such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and asthma.
7. Discuss how stress contributes to the development of psychological disorders like depression, anxiety, and PTSD. Include the role of vulnerability and coping resources.

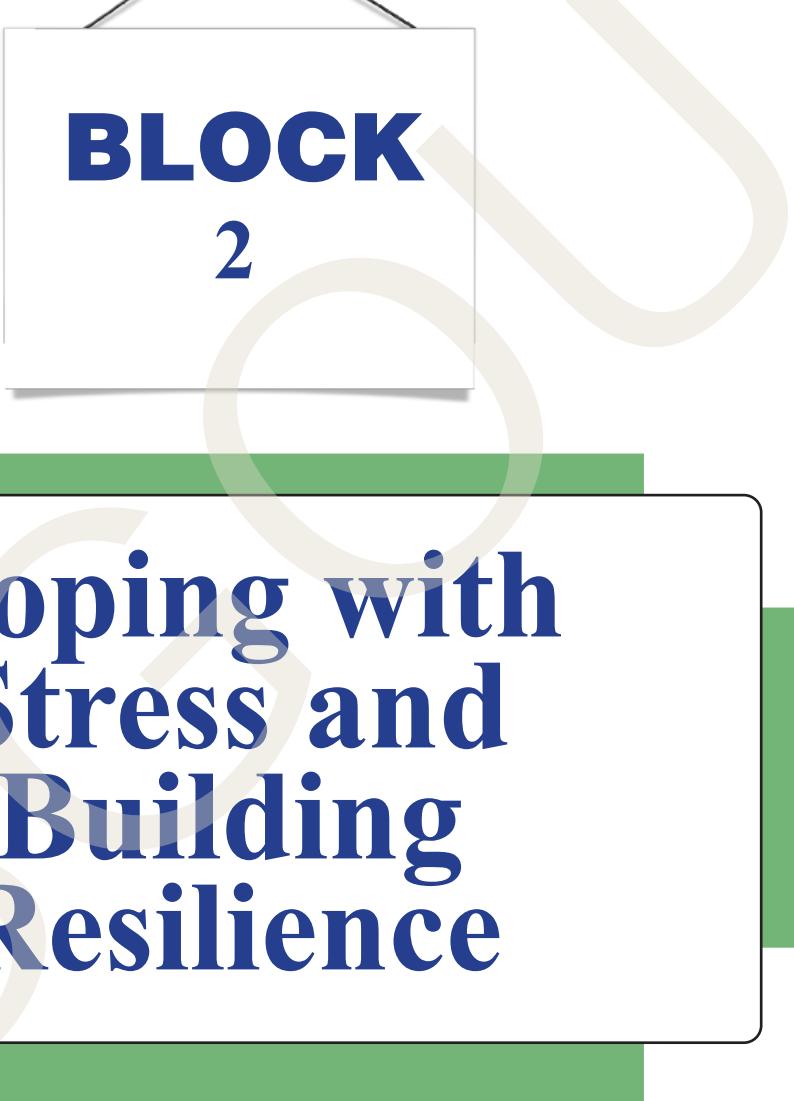
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BLOCK
2

Coping with Stress and Building Resilience

Unit 1

COPING WITH STRESS

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explore the concept of coping with stress
- ◆ differentiate between problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping
- ◆ discuss the different methods of problem-focused coping
- ◆ describe the different methods of emotion-focused coping

Background

Stress affects people in different ways, and the strategies they use to cope often depend on the nature of the situation. Consider the examples of Aman and Neha, two individuals facing very different types of stressors.

Aman, a high school teacher, experienced stress when his school suddenly introduced a new curriculum, requiring him to redesign all his lesson plans in a short period. Instead of becoming overwhelmed, Aman responded by creating a weekly schedule, breaking down his work into smaller tasks, and collaborating with colleagues who had already made the changes. His approach was structured and action-oriented, aiming to directly tackle the problem.

In contrast, Neha, a marketing professional, felt emotionally drained after her closest friend moved abroad. She could not change the situation, but she found ways to manage her emotional response. Neha turned to painting and yoga—activities that brought her joy—and kept in touch with her friend through regular video calls. She also practiced mindfulness to help her process her emotions.

These two examples highlight how coping with stress is not a one-size-fits-all process. People adopt different strategies depending on whether the stressor is within their control or not. Understanding these differences is the first step in learning how to manage stress effectively.

Let's try to understand these different strategies in detail.



Keywords

Coping, problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, time management, prioritisation, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and problem-solving skills.

Discussion

People of any age can experience stress in their life, and they adopt different ways to deal with that situation. Do you remember the last time you were under stress? What did you do to come out of it? Or have you ever had an experience where your strategies didn't work at all? What are the ways people deal with stress?

Let's try to understand the different ways people use to deal with stress.

2.1.1. Coping with stress

Stress is an inevitable part of life, arising from various demands and challenges we face in our lives. Since stress is linked to both emotional and physical strain, we naturally try to manage it by taking action in such situations. The strategies we use to deal with these stressful experiences are referred to as coping with stress. Coping is defined as the thoughts and behaviours used to manage the internal and external demands of the situation that are appraised as stressful.

A young professional juggling multiple deadlines at work was asked how he handled the pressure. He shared, “Whenever things get too intense, I pause for a quick breathing exercise, put on some calming music, and write in my journal to clear my mind.” People often create their own personal ways of handling stress, like the professional mentioned earlier. However, psychologists have also identified general coping styles that can be useful across various situations. Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984) outlined two main types of coping, each serving a different function.

2.1.1.1 Problem-focused coping

Problem-focused coping refers to a strategy aimed at addressing the source of stress directly. This approach involves taking practical steps to reduce or eliminate the stressor, thereby alleviating the psychological impact of the situation. Individuals typically use problem-focused coping when they perceive the stressor as controllable or changeable. Rather than managing the emotional response, this form of coping emphasizes action—such as gathering information, making decisions, setting goals, or implementing plans.

Problem-focused coping can be highly effective when individuals have the capacity or resources to influence the outcome of the stressful event. It is often associated with better adjustment, especially in situations that allow for change through effort or planning.

Consider a student who is feeling stressed about an upcoming exam. Instead of dwelling on the anxiety, the student develops a study schedule, joins a study group, and seeks help from the instructor to clarify doubts. By actively working to improve performance, the student is using problem-focused coping to manage the stressor—the exam—directly.

2.1.1.2 Emotion-focused coping

Emotion-focused coping refers to strategies aimed at managing or regulating the emotional distress associated with a stressful situation, rather than trying to change the stressor itself. This approach is typically used when the stressor is perceived as uncontrollable or unchangeable, such as in the case of a chronic illness, loss of a loved one, or a natural disaster.

Rather than targeting the external problem, emotion-focused coping helps individuals reduce their negative emotional responses through various means, including seeking social support, engaging in relaxation techniques, reframing the situation positively, or using distraction. While this type of coping does not eliminate the source of stress, it can improve emotional well-being and reduce the psychological burden of stress. For example, imagine a person who has been diagnosed with a chronic illness. Since the condition cannot be cured, they focus on accepting the situation, expressing their emotions through journaling, talking with friends, or participating in support groups. These actions help the individual manage their feelings of sadness, fear, and frustration, demonstrating the use of emotion-focused coping. The table below shows the differences between problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping.

Table no.2.1.1 : Difference between problem focused coping and emotion focused coping

Aspect	Problem-Focused Coping	Emotion-Focused Coping
Focus	Focuses on changing or managing the stressful situation itself.	Focuses on managing emotional responses to the stressor.
Situation	Used when the situation is changeable or controllable.	Used when the situation is perceived as unchangeable or uncontrollable.
Example	Creating a study schedule to prepare for an upcoming exam.	Practicing deep breathing or meditation to reduce anxiety about an exam.

Although both approaches are effective in helping individuals cope with stress, they differ in their focus—one primarily aims to change the stressful situation itself, while the other is directed at managing the emotional reactions that arise from the situation. In this section, we will explore in detail the various strategies or methods that fall under each coping style, providing a deeper understanding of how individuals apply these techniques in different stressful situations.



1. Problem-Focused -Coping Strategies

These strategies are designed to help individuals tackle stressors in a structured and effective manner. They include methods such as time management, prioritization, and using problem-solving skills. Each of these strategies plays a crucial role in helping individuals regain a sense of control and reduce the impact of stress in their lives.

i. Time management

“Where have I left my keys?”—a common frustration for someone rushing to make it to an important meeting. This sense of time urgency, where every minute feels like it counts, can heighten stress levels. When people feel there isn’t enough time to complete their tasks, it can lead to pressure and anxiety. This is particularly true when dealing with deadlines or time-sensitive situations. Effective management of time can significantly reduce this stress. In the next section, we will discuss strategies that can help individuals manage such time pressures more effectively.

A key method for staying organized and reducing stress is time management. By planning ahead, setting priorities, and managing responsibilities, individuals can use their time more efficiently. Time management is the practice of organizing and planning how to divide time between various tasks and responsibilities. Effective time management helps individuals gain control over their daily schedule, reduce stress, and increase productivity. For those dealing with stress, time management can be a critical coping strategy to help them feel less overwhelmed and more in control of their situation.

ii. Prioritisation

Prioritization is a key problem-focused coping strategy that helps individuals allocate their time and energy to tasks that hold the greatest importance or urgency. It involves evaluating tasks based on their deadlines, potential impact, and relevance, and then systematically addressing them in order of priority. This method is especially useful when dealing with overlapping demands, as it allows a person to focus on what truly matters in the moment, reducing the feeling of being overwhelmed.

By effectively prioritizing tasks, individuals can avoid unnecessary stress caused by trying to do everything at once. For example, in a work setting, if an employee has several projects due within the same week, they might prioritize the project with the closest deadline or the one with the highest impact on the company’s objectives. This structured approach not only helps them meet deadlines but also enhances productivity by reducing the cognitive load of having to keep track of multiple tasks.

Prioritization allows for more strategic decision-making, ensures that important tasks don’t get neglected, and can provide a sense of accomplishment as tasks are completed in an organized manner. By focusing on the most pressing issues first, individuals are better equipped to tackle challenges one step at a time, minimizing stress and enhancing overall well-being.

iii. Problem-solving Skills

Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing the source of stress in order to reduce or eliminate it. This type of coping is most effective in situations where the

individual believes that change is possible and has some control over the stressor. It emphasizes taking constructive action rather than avoiding or ignoring the problem. Problem-solving skills are an important aspect of problem-focused coping. These skills involve a systematic process of identifying the underlying causes of stress, generating potential solutions, evaluating their feasibility, and implementing a plan of action to resolve the issue. Rather than feeling overwhelmed by the situation, individuals with strong problem-solving abilities can approach stressors methodically, which helps them regain a sense of control and reduce anxiety.

The problem-solving process typically involves the following steps:

- 1. Identifying the Problem:** The first step is to clearly define what is causing the stress. This involves recognizing the source of the issue and understanding its scope. Without this step, individuals may try to address symptoms rather than the root cause of stress.
- 2. Generating Possible Solutions:** Once the problem is identified, the next step is to brainstorm potential solutions. This phase encourages creative thinking, allowing individuals to explore various approaches to managing the stressor.
- 3. Evaluating the Solutions:** After generating options, it is important to assess their potential effectiveness. This includes considering the resources required, possible outcomes, and the practicality of implementing each solution.
- 4. Taking Action:** Finally, individuals choose the most feasible solution and take steps to implement it. By actively working towards a solution, individuals can alleviate the stress and feel more empowered.

Music Therapy: A Soothing Way to Cope with Stress

Did you know that music has the power to calm your mind and body? Music therapy uses this amazing ability to help people reduce stress and feel better. Listening to relaxing music can slow down your heart rate and lower blood pressure, making you feel more peaceful and focused.

According to recent research by the American Psychological Association (APA), around 70% of people report feeling less stressed after listening to their favourite music. This shows how powerful music can be as a natural stress buster.

Not only listening, but playing an instrument or singing can also help express emotions and lift your mood. That's why music therapy is used in hospitals, schools, and workplaces to support mental health and improve overall well-being.

So next time you're stressed, try putting on some calming tunes — your mind and body will thank you!



2. Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies

Emotion-focused coping strategies aim to manage the emotional response to stress rather than the stressor itself. These strategies are useful when the stressor is beyond control or cannot be changed. They help individuals reduce negative emotions like anxiety or frustration and maintain emotional balance. The following sections will examine specific emotion-focused coping strategies, including deep breathing, meditation, and Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), all of which are classified under relaxation-based interventions that can help manage stress.

i. Relaxation techniques

Relaxation techniques are effective emotion-focused coping strategies that help manage the emotional and physical symptoms of stress. These methods work by calming the mind and reducing the body's stress response, promoting a sense of inner peace and balance. Here are three commonly used relaxation techniques:

a. Deep breathing

Deep breathing is a simple yet powerful technique that helps activate the body's relaxation response. It involves slow, intentional breaths—inhaling deeply through the nose, allowing the lungs to fill completely, and then exhaling slowly through the mouth. This practice lowers heart rate, reduces muscle tension, and brings immediate relief from anxiety or tension. It can be done anywhere and is especially useful in high-pressure moments, such as before a presentation or during a stressful commute.

To practice deep breathing, begin by choosing a quiet and comfortable environment. Assume a position that allows for a straight posture—either sitting upright or lying down—with the spine aligned and shoulders relaxed.

Place one hand on the abdomen to increase awareness of diaphragmatic movement. Slowly inhale through the nose for approximately four seconds, allowing the abdomen to rise as the lungs expand. Briefly hold the breath for one to two seconds. Then, exhale gently through the mouth over a period of about six seconds, allowing the abdomen to fall naturally.

This breathing cycle should be repeated continuously for 5 to 10 minutes. Maintaining focus on the breath helps bring attention to the present moment, reducing anxiety, lowering muscular tension, and fostering emotional balance. When practiced regularly, deep breathing enhances stress management by activating the body's relaxation response and improving overall well-being.

b. Meditation

Meditation involves a series of mental practices designed to redirect attention and reach a trance-like state of awareness. It can help induce relaxation, which in turn can alleviate physiological responses to stress. Studies indicate that meditation is an effective way to relax and lower blood pressure in both adolescents and adults, regardless of gender. One key benefit of meditation is that it can be practiced anytime and anywhere, even in settings like a classroom before an important test. Research also suggests that

meditation is helpful in reducing stress levels in cancer patients. One form of meditation, called concentrative meditation, focuses attention inward or on a repetitive stimulus, such as one's breath.

c. Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is a relaxation technique widely used to manage stress and its physical symptoms. Developed by American physician Edmund Jacobson in the early 20th century, PMR is based on the principle that muscle tension is a common physiological response to stress. Jacobson proposed that by systematically tensing and then relaxing specific muscle groups, individuals can become more aware of physical tension and actively reduce it. This process promotes a deep state of relaxation, helping to alleviate anxiety, improve emotional regulation, and support overall well-being.

How PMR Works:

The technique involves tensing specific muscle groups in the body for about 5-10 seconds and then relaxing them for 20-30 seconds, focusing on the sensation of release and relaxation. This process helps increase awareness of the physical sensations associated with tension and relaxation, enabling individuals to better recognize and reduce stress in their bodies.

To practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), begin by finding a comfortable and quiet space where you can either sit or lie down. Start by taking a few deep breaths to help relax your mind and body. Then, systematically tense and relax different muscle groups, starting from your feet and working upwards. For each muscle group, tense the muscles for about 5-10 seconds, focusing on the feeling of tension, and then release the tension, allowing the muscles to relax for 20-30 seconds. Pay close attention to the contrast between tension and relaxation as you move through each muscle group, including the feet, calves, thighs, stomach, hands, arms, shoulders, neck, and face. After completing the muscle groups, finish with deep breathing to enhance relaxation. This process helps reduce physical tension, increase body awareness, and promote a state of calm.

2. Physical Exercise

Physical exercise is an effective stress-coping strategy with significant physical, emotional, and psychological benefits. Exercise helps reduce the physiological stress response by lowering heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension while releasing endorphins that improve mood and relaxation. Regular physical activity not only enhances mental well-being by alleviating symptoms of anxiety and depression but also increases energy levels, improves sleep quality, and boosts self-confidence. Exercise also offers a wide range of benefits that improve cardiovascular health, mood, and overall resilience. It helps distract individuals from stressors, enhances emotional regulation, and fosters a sense of accomplishment. Overall, physical exercise strengthens an individual's ability to cope with stress and promotes long-term mental and physical health.

3. Cognitive Approach in Coping with Stress

The cognitive approach to coping with stress emphasizes the role of thoughts in shaping emotional responses to stressors. According to this approach, stress is not only



the result of external events but also how individuals perceive and interpret these events. Cognitive strategies focus on identifying and altering negative thought patterns to reduce stress and promote healthier responses. One key aspect of this approach is recognizing that negative thoughts can exacerbate stress and adopting strategies to replace them with healthier and more adaptive patterns of thinking. Most of these interventions are based on the principle of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) by teaching people how to appraise stressful events and disaggregate the stressors into specific tasks. The person learns to distinguish those aspects of the stressor that may be changeable from those that are not. Specific coping strategies are then practiced to deal with these specific stressors.

♦ Identifying negative thought patterns and replacing them with adaptive ones

It is a key strategy in the cognitive approach to coping with stress. Cognitive errors such as catastrophizing (imagining something is much worse than it really is — e.g., "If I miss this deadline, my whole career is over"), overgeneralizing (making broad conclusions based on one event — e.g., "I failed once, so I'll always fail"), or black-and-white thinking (seeing things as all good or all bad, with no in-between — e.g., "If I'm not perfect, I'm a total failure"), can intensify stress by distorting reality and making situations seem worse than they are. The first step is to recognize these patterns and acknowledge how they contribute to stress. Once identified, these negative thoughts can be challenged and reframed. For example, instead of thinking, "I can't handle this," one might replace it with, "This is tough, but I've handled challenges before, and I can give it a try." By focusing on solutions and adopting a more rational and realistic perspective, individuals can reduce anxiety and develop a healthier outlook. This process of cognitive restructuring helps build emotional resilience and empowers individuals to approach stressors with greater confidence and control.

Recap

- ♦ Coping refers to the thoughts and behaviours used to handle stress.
- ♦ Two major coping styles are problem-focused and emotion-focused coping.
- ♦ Problem-focused coping involves tackling the source of stress directly.
- ♦ Emotion-focused coping aims to manage the emotional impact of stress.
- ♦ Time management helps reduce stress by planning and prioritizing tasks.
- ♦ Prioritization focuses on handling the most important tasks first.
- ♦ Problem-solving skills involve analysing and resolving the root of stress.
- ♦ Relaxation techniques help regulate emotional and physical stress responses.
- ♦ Deep breathing calms the body and mind through controlled breathing.

- ◆ Meditation promotes inner focus and reduces stress-related symptoms.
- ◆ Progressive Muscle Relaxation relieves physical tension through muscle control.
- ◆ Exercise boosts mood, lowers stress hormones, and improves overall health.
- ◆ Cognitive strategies reconstruct negative thoughts into more adaptive and realistic ones.

Objective Questions

1. What term describes strategies to deal with stress?
2. Who proposed the two main types of coping?
3. Which coping focuses on solving the problem?
4. Which coping addresses emotional response?
5. What is the term for organizing time effectively?
6. What strategy ranks tasks by importance?
7. In what kind of situations is problem-focused coping considered appropriate?
8. In the case of a chronic illness, which coping strategy is most appropriate—problem-focused or emotion-focused?
9. What is the relaxation method that includes tensing and releasing muscles?
10. What is the process of identifying, challenging, and replacing cognitive errors to reduce stress in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) called?
11. Which hormone levels are typically reduced through physical exercise?
12. What is the term for physical activity that reduces stress?
13. Which coping is used when the stressor is unchangeable?
14. What term describes identifying and replacing negative thoughts?
15. The cognitive approach to stress reduction primarily focuses on changing which aspect of an individual's response to stress?



16. What is the first step in problem-solving?
17. Name the therapeutic model associated with the cognitive coping approach.
18. What kind of meditation focuses attention inward?
19. What emotion-focused technique helps lower blood pressure?
20. Who developed Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)?

Answers

1. Coping
2. Lazarus and Folkman
3. Problem-focused
4. Emotion-focused
5. Time management
6. Prioritization
7. Where the stressor is perceived as controllable or changeable.
8. Emotion-focused
9. PMR
10. Cognitive restructuring
11. Cortisol
12. Exercise
13. Emotion-focused
14. Reframing
15. Unhealthy thought patterns
16. Identification

17. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

18. Concentrative

19. Relaxation

20. Edmund Jacobson

Assignments

1. Explain the concept of coping with stress and describe the two primary types of coping strategies identified by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman.
2. Discuss the role of problem-focused coping in managing stress, and provide examples of effective problem-focused strategies that individuals can use in daily life.
3. How does emotion-focused coping differ from problem-focused coping, and when is it more effective to use emotion-focused strategies?
4. Explain the relationship between stress and time management. How does effective time management serve as a coping strategy for individuals dealing with time-related stress?
5. Discuss the cognitive approach in coping with stress, including how identifying and changing negative thought patterns can help reduce stress and promote emotional well-being.
6. Explore the role of relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation, in managing stress. How do these techniques help individuals cope with stress?
7. Describe how an individual might apply problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies in two different stressful situations, such as a work deadline and a health concern.

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Unit 2

Building Resilience

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ◆ explore the concept of resilience.
- ◆ discuss different ways of building resilience.
- ◆ identify positive coping strategies that enhance resilience.
- ◆ appreciate the new age strategies for building resilience.

Background

Have you ever wondered how some people manage to rise above the most painful and difficult circumstances and still go on to achieve greatness? Take Oprah Winfrey, for example. Born into poverty in rural Mississippi, she faced a childhood filled with hardship, including abuse and loss. For many, such trauma could have been overwhelming. But Oprah didn't let her past define her future. Through determination, self-belief, and a drive to overcome, she transformed her life, eventually becoming one of the most influential media personalities in the world. Her journey is more than a story of success; it's a powerful illustration of the human ability to bounce back from adversity. This quality—the capacity to recover, grow, and thrive despite life's challenges—is what psychologists refer to as resilience.

Why do some people like Oprah emerge stronger from adversity while others remain stuck in despair?

What exactly is resilience?

Is it a personality trait we are born with or a skill we can develop over time?

The following portions explore these important questions.



Keywords

Resilience, Mindfulness, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Cognitive restructuring, mindfulness-based stress reduction, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, Forest Bathing Yoga Walking, Grounding.

Discussion

2.2.1 Definition

Facing change or loss is a natural part of life, and everyone goes through challenges at some point. Some difficulties may be small, like not getting selected for a course or missing a promotion, while others can be much more serious, like natural disasters or acts of violence.

Have you ever wondered why some people manage to thrive and succeed even after facing difficult challenges, while others struggle to do so?

What makes them keep going despite failure, loss, or disappointment? The answer lies in a powerful psychological concept called resilience.

Consider the story of Neha, a college student who faced the sudden loss of her father just before her final exams. The emotional burden was immense, and her academic future seemed uncertain. While it would have been understandable for her to withdraw or give up, Neha chose to seek support from her teachers and friends, took time to grieve, and gradually found the strength to prepare for her exams. Not only did she pass with distinction, but she also became a peer mentor, helping others navigate difficult times.

Neha's story highlights how resilience doesn't mean the absence of pain or struggle—it means facing adversity, processing it, and continuing to move forward with purpose and strength.

Let's understand the concept of resilience in more detail.

Resilience, in psychological terms, is defined as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress (American Psychological Association (APA, 2022).

According to Michael Rutter (1985), resilience is our ability to bounce back from life's challenges and unforeseen difficulties, providing mental protection from emotional and mental disorders. Resilience is influenced by many factors, including an individual's thoughts, emotions, and the culture they live in. Resilience helps people stay strong by thinking positively, being flexible in how they handle problems, and managing their emotions in healthy ways. People with high resilience are more likely to cope better with stress, feel less anxious or depressed, and enjoy better mental health overall. The

concept of resilience has psychological, biological, and sociocultural dimensions.

Psychological resilience encompasses an individual's mental health and psychological functioning. It includes cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and effective coping strategies. People with high levels of psychological resilience tend to experience lower levels of negative affectivity, such as anxiety and depression, and exhibit better mental health. Biological resilience involves how well our biological systems cope with and recover from stress and adversities. Sociocultural dimension encompasses the societal and cultural factors such as social support, community resources, cultural beliefs, and practices that enhance the resilience process.

Measuring resilience

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is a widely used self-assessment tool developed by Kathryn M. Connor and Jonathan R.T. Davidson to measure resilience in individuals (Connor & Davidson, 2003). This scale includes 25 items, each rated on a 5-point scale, with total scores ranging from 0 to 100, where higher scores reflect stronger resilience. The CD-RISC evaluates several key aspects of resilience, including self-confidence, emotional endurance, adaptability, trust in one's intuition, and the strength of interpersonal relationships. It serves as a valuable resource for both clinical settings and research focused on understanding and enhancing psychological resilience.

Resilience doesn't mean a person is free from stress or life's hardships. People who are resilient don't ignore problems or pretend everything is perfect. They know that tough times are a part of life, and that pain and sadness are natural. Even though they feel upset after something difficult happens, they find ways to manage those tough situations. Resilience gives people the inner strength to deal with stress. It acts like a mental reserve they can rely on when life gets hard. Psychologists believe that resilient people are better at recovering and rebuilding their lives after facing difficulties.

Do you believe that people are naturally born with the ability to be resilient, or is it something that can be developed over time?

How can one cultivate resilience in their life?

The next section explores these important questions.

2.2.2 Building Resilience

Psychologists have found that resilience is not something you're just born with—it can be learned and strengthened over time. A wide variety of methods can be adopted to build resilience. The following section describes some of the most effective ways to enhance resilience, ranging from foundational practices like self-care and positive thinking to more contemporary approaches such as mindfulness and nature-based practices.



2.2.2.1 Building Resilience Through Self-Care and Positive Coping Strategies

Resilience is crucial for psychological well-being, helping individuals adapt and grow through life's challenges. This section focuses on understanding how resilience can be built at an individual level and presents practical strategies to cultivate it for overcoming adversity.

♦ Through Self-Care

Resilience, generally understood as the ability to recover from adversity, is experienced and expressed differently by each person. This variation stems from the interaction of factors like personal traits, life experiences, social environments, and external influences. Certain personal traits are closely linked to higher resilience, with optimism, self-efficacy, and adaptability being among the most important. Optimism, the tendency to expect positive outcomes, helps individuals view stressful situations as temporary and manageable, which in turn fosters resilience. Alongside optimism, self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to influence events and outcomes, provides the confidence needed to tackle challenges effectively. This sense of self-belief is key in overcoming obstacles and maintaining resilience. Additionally, adaptability, the ability to adjust thoughts, emotions, and behaviours to changing circumstances, plays a critical role in navigating the unpredictable nature of adversity. When these traits—optimism, self-efficacy, and adaptability—work together, they create a strong foundation for individuals to cope with and thrive in the face of life's challenges.

Alongside psychological resilience, maintaining physical health through proper nutrition, regular exercise, and sufficient sleep is equally important, as these factors work together to support overall well-being and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Being physically healthy provides the body with the strength and energy needed to handle stress and recover from difficult situations. At the same time, having a resilient mindset often leads to healthier lifestyle choices and helps lessen the negative effects of stress on the body. According to Southwick and Charney (2012), factors such as regular exercise, nutritious eating, and proper sleep play a key role in building and maintaining resilience. This highlights the importance of including physical health practices in strategies designed to boost resilience.

1. Exercise and Resilience

Regular physical activity helps build resilience by improving mood, reducing stress, and lowering symptoms of anxiety and depression. Exercise releases feel-good chemicals like endorphins and supports brain areas that manage emotions and stress. Staying active is a simple and effective way to boost both mental and physical resilience.

2. Nutrition and Resilience

A healthy diet is important for building resilience. The brain needs key nutrients to work well, and lacking them can affect mood and mental health. Diets rich in omega-3s, antioxidants, and balanced meals help reduce anxiety and depression while improving

emotional stability.

3. Sleep and Resilience

Sleep plays a vital role in supporting both body and mind. Good sleep helps with memory, focus, and managing emotions—all key to resilience. Poor sleep, however, increases stress and weakens our ability to cope. Simple habits like a regular sleep schedule, a calm sleep environment, and using relaxation techniques can improve sleep and strengthen resilience.

Resilience is also shaped by our social environment. Strong relationships with friends, family, and supportive social networks provide emotional comfort and practical help during difficult times. Being able to share thoughts and feelings with someone you trust can reduce feelings of isolation and build a sense of connection. Setting realistic goals and breaking them into manageable steps helps maintain motivation and direction, even in the face of setbacks. Engaging in activities that bring joy—such as creative hobbies, time in nature, or volunteering—can recharge your mental energy. Together, these self-care and social strategies form a strong foundation for resilience, helping individuals bounce back from adversity with greater confidence and inner strength.

♦ Through Positive Coping Strategies

Managing stress well is essential for building resilience. Long-term stress can harm both physical and mental health, making it harder to bounce back from challenges. Practices like relaxation techniques, biofeedback, and mindfulness-based stress reduction can help people handle stress more effectively. Learning and using different coping methods—such as solving problems directly or managing emotions—also supports better stress management and strengthens resilience.

♦ Cognitive Behavioural Approaches

Cognitive-behavioural approaches play a crucial role in building resilience. Developing resilience involves learning and practicing positive coping skills. One powerful approach is using cognitive-behavioural methods, which help individuals understand how their thoughts influence their emotions and actions. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) focuses on changing negative thought patterns and replacing them with healthier, more realistic ones. CBT incorporates techniques such as cognitive restructuring, problem-solving training, and stress inoculation training. Techniques such as cognitive restructuring help people identify and reframe unhelpful thoughts. These methods improve emotional regulation and help people better handle stress.

Research in cognitive psychology emphasizes the importance of how an individual interprets and appraises stressful events. Cognitive appraisal involves assessing whether a situation is a threat or a challenge. Seeing challenges as opportunities for growth rather than threats can lead to more adaptive, resilient responses. Positive reappraisal or viewing a difficult situation in a more optimistic light has been shown to enhance resilience and emotional recovery.

As noted by researchers, these techniques improve how individuals perceive and respond to stressful situations, making them more adaptable and resilient. This supports



the view that resilience is not an inborn trait but a skill that can be cultivated through deliberate and structured practice.

Alongside these cognitive strategies, self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to handle challenges—significantly contributes to resilience. People with high self-efficacy, as described by Bandura (1997), view difficult tasks as chances to grow. This belief system encourages problem-solving and confidence in managing stress, helping individuals bounce back more quickly from adversity.

2.2.2.2 Building Resilience: New Age Strategies

With the growing awareness of mental health and well-being, the concept of resilience has expanded beyond traditional coping strategies. While cognitive techniques and emotional regulation continue to play a vital role, contemporary approaches are increasingly incorporating holistic and integrative methods in fostering resilience.

Let's now explore these new-age strategies.

1. Mindfulness As a Tool for Building Resilience

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully aware of one's thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surroundings in the present moment, without judgment. It helps improve resilience by promoting emotional regulation, reducing stress, and boosting cognitive abilities. By focusing on the present, mindfulness prevents one from getting caught up in negative thoughts about the past or future, making it easier to respond to stress in a calm, reflective way. It encourages acceptance of experiences without labelling them as good or bad, thereby reducing the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed.

Mindfulness improves emotional regulation by enhancing brain activity linked to emotional control, allowing individuals to manage their emotions better. It also fosters cognitive flexibility, enabling people to adapt their thinking to changing situations, which is crucial for overcoming challenges. Mindfulness-based programs, like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), have been shown to significantly reduce stress and anxiety, making it easier to cope with adversity. MBSR focuses on practices like mindful breathing, body scans, and gentle yoga to reduce stress and promote emotional balance. By regularly practicing MBSR techniques, individuals learn to manage daily pressures more effectively, which strengthens their capacity to bounce back from adversity.

MBCT, on the other hand, combines mindfulness techniques with cognitive-behavioural strategies to help individuals identify and disengage from negative thinking patterns. It is especially effective in preventing depressive relapse but also supports general emotional resilience by improving self-awareness and emotional regulation.

Together, MBSR and MBCT empower individuals to face challenges with a more balanced mindset. These programs also enhance empathy and social connection, the key elements of resilience. Through mindfulness, individuals can develop stronger resilience by improving emotional control, cognitive flexibility, and stress management.

Case Study: Building Resilience Through Meditation

John, a 45-year-old teacher, had been struggling with the emotional strain of managing a classroom while dealing with personal issues at home. His stress levels were affecting his work performance and relationships with colleagues. Seeking help, John participated in a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) program, which combined mindfulness practices with cognitive restructuring techniques. He learned to focus on the present moment through breathing exercises and mindfulness meditation, which allowed him to detach from overwhelming thoughts and emotions. Over time, John developed a greater sense of awareness of his stress triggers and learned how to respond to them calmly rather than react impulsively. As he practiced mindfulness daily, he found that his emotional resilience improved. He was able to handle challenging situations at work with more patience and less frustration. Moreover, he noticed a reduction in the impact of personal stress on his professional life, demonstrating how mindfulness helped him build resilience and effectively manage his stress.

2. Forest Bathing

Forest bathing, also known as Shinrin-yoku, is a practice that originated in Japan in 1982, where people are encouraged to spend time in nature to relax and unplug from daily stresses. This practice has been shown to significantly lower stress hormones like cortisol and reduce anxiety. Even brief interactions with nature can help regulate the nervous system, boost positive emotions, and enhance overall well-being. Studies suggest that forest bathing also improves cognitive flexibility, memory, and immune system function, making it an excellent tool for stress relief and resilience. By simply being in nature, individuals can regain mental energy, reduce negative feelings, and strengthen their psychological and physical health. Forest bathing is known to be particularly effective in reducing stress, enhancing cognitive functioning, and boosting the immune system.

3. Yoga Walking

Yoga walking combines the calming effects of yoga with the mindfulness of walking. It involves moving with awareness, synchronization steps with breath, and incorporating gentle stretches or even small yoga poses while walking. This practice promotes present-moment awareness, which is essential for reducing stress, clearing the mind, and fostering relaxation.

Key Elements of Yoga Walking .

- Mindful Movement: Paying close attention to the sensations of walking, the rhythm of your breath, and your surroundings.
- Breath Synchronization: Coordinating your steps with your breath, such as inhaling for a certain number of steps and exhaling for another.
- Gentle Stretching: Incorporating simple stretches or modified yoga poses into your walk, like arm stretches, shoulder rolls, or even standing poses like the Mountain Pose.



- Present Movement Awareness: Focusing on the present movement, rather than dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Yoga walking not only improves physical fitness but also enhances memory and cognitive function. When practiced in groups, it promotes social connection, reduces stress, boosts self-esteem, and creates a sense of purpose. Regular practice can help individuals find balance, reduce anxiety, and improve their overall mental and physical health. To make the most out of yoga walking, it's important to choose a peaceful route, start with shorter walks, adapt to one's energy level, and focus on mindful breathing.

4. Grounding

Grounding is a simple yet powerful technique to help individuals stay focused on the present when they feel overwhelmed, anxious, or stressed. It encourages awareness of the immediate environment and utilizes all five senses to maintain attention in the here and now. One popular grounding technique is the 5-4-3-2-1 method, which uses the five senses to bring awareness back to the present:

- 5 things you can see (e.g., the desk in front of you, your notebook, a painting on the wall, the window)
- 4 things you can touch (e.g., your clothes, a pencil, the floor, your hair)
- 3 things you can hear (e.g., a ticking clock, birds, distant voices)
- 2 things you can smell (e.g., fresh air, perfume)
- 1 thing you can taste (e.g., the taste of chocolate ice cream, a favourite candy etc.)

This exercise serves as a distraction from negative emotions and helps individuals reconnect with reality, reducing feelings of stress or anxiety. Grounding is effective because it helps individuals pause and reorient their thoughts, preventing them from being swept away by overwhelming emotions. By incorporating grounding techniques into daily life, people can better manage stress and maintain emotional balance, contributing to greater resilience in the face of challenges.

Recap

- ◆ Resilience means the ability to bounce back from stress and hardship.
- ◆ It is not something we are born with, but a skill that can be developed over time.
- ◆ Self-care plays an important role in building resilience.
- ◆ Healthy habits like exercise, sleep, and eating well support resilience.
- ◆ Managing stress through relaxation techniques improves emotional strength.
- ◆ Mindfulness helps people stay calm and focused during tough times.
- ◆ Social connections like friends and family give emotional support.

- ◆ Setting realistic goals builds confidence and motivation.
- ◆ Positive thinking helps people see challenges as manageable.
- ◆ Cognitive-behavioural strategies improve how we think and react to stress.
- ◆ Self-efficacy, or believing in your own abilities, makes it easier to cope.
- ◆ Positive emotions help people recover faster from negative experiences.
- ◆ Forest bathing is a new-age strategy for building resilience.
- ◆ Grounding techniques like the 5-4-3-2-1 method bring focus and calm.
- ◆ Yoga walking is also a new method that helps individuals become more resilient in life.

Objective Questions

1. What is the term used to describe the ability to recover quickly from difficulties?
2. Where does the concept of forest bathing originate from?
3. What does CBT stand for in psychological therapy?
4. Which method involves focusing on the present moment without judgment?
5. Who introduced the concept of self-efficacy?
6. Which new-age resilience method includes walking mindfully while incorporating breathing and stretching exercises?
7. How many senses are used in the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique?
8. Through the practise of forest bathing, what key psychological strength is enhanced to help individuals cope with stress?
9. Which strategy includes changing negative thoughts to more realistic ones?
10. Which program combines mindfulness with cognitive behavioural techniques?
11. According to Bandura, what belief significantly contributes to resilience?
12. What is the primary focus of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)?
13. Which resilience -building method focuses on the connection between thoughts, emotions and actions?



14. Name the stress -reduction technique that originated in japan and encourages mindful immersion in nature?
15. Which domain of resilience includes support from friends and family?

Answers

1. Resilience
2. Japan
3. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
4. Mindfulness
5. Albert Bandura
6. Yoga Walking
7. Five
8. Resilience
9. Cognitive restructuring
10. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)
11. Self-efficacy
12. Reducing stress through mindfulness
13. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
14. Forest Bathing
15. Social domain

Assignments

1. Define resilience. Explain the psychological and emotional factors that contribute to developing resilience.
2. Discuss the role of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) in building resilience. Include key techniques such as cognitive restructuring.

3. Describe the importance of self-care in developing resilience. Include aspects such as physical health, stress management, and engaging in enjoyable activities.
4. How do social relationships and support systems enhance resilience? Discuss the role of family, friends, and community.
5. Explain the concept and practice of grounding techniques in resilience building. Include the 5-4-3-2-1 technique in your answer.
6. What are mindfulness-based approaches to resilience? Discuss MBSR and MBCT as methods to enhance mental well-being.
7. Compare and contrast traditional resilience-building strategies with new-age techniques such as mindfulness, yoga walking, forest bathing, and grounding.

Suggested Reading

1. Ellis Jones, I. (n.d.). *A Simple Form of Mindfulness Walking Meditation*.
2. Neenan, M. (2009). *Developing resilience: A cognitive-behavioural approach*. Routledge.
3. Owen, R. (2011). *Facing the storm: Using CBT, mindfulness, and acceptance to build resilience when your world's falling apart*. Routledge.
4. Southwick, S. M., & Charney, D. S. (2018). *Resilience: The science of mastering life's greatest challenges* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Reference

1. Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: *The exercise of control*. New York: W. H. Freeman.
2. Roberts, D. L. (n.d.). *The psychology of resilience: Understanding and enhancing human strength and perseverance*. Simple Book Publishing.
3. Schiraldi, G. R. (2017). *The Resilience Workbook: Essential Skills to Recover from Stress, Trauma, and Adversity*. New Harbinger Publications.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER SETS



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- A

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

UNDERGRADUATE (CBCS) DISTANCE MODE EXAMINATIONS

B A PSYCHOLOGY

THIRD SEMESTER

SKILL ENHANCEMENT COURSE

STRESS MANAGEMENT

B23PY01SE

CBCS-UG Regulations

2021-2024 Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

SECTION-A

Objective Type Questions

Answer any ten. Each question carries one mark (10X1=10)

1. Who proposed the concept of the 'Fight or Flight' response?
2. What term is used to describe any internal or external event that triggers a stress response?
3. Which type of conflict involves choosing between two desirable goals?
4. Which personality type is associated with competitiveness and high stress vulnerability?
5. Name the stress hormone released by the adrenal glands.
6. What is the final stage of Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)?



7. Which physiological system is activated during the fight-or-flight response?
8. What does the abbreviation HPA stand for in the context of the stress response system?
9. Which type of coping focuses on managing the source of stress?
10. What term is used for low-intensity everyday stressors like losing keys or missing a bus?
11. Which brain structure is most involved in processing emotional stress?
12. Which coping method is aimed at relieving emotional tension instead of solving the problem directly?
13. Which relaxation technique involves systematically tightening and then releasing different muscle groups to reduce physical tension?
14. What is the term for the ability to bounce back from adversity or trauma?
15. Which approach involves being fully aware and accepting of the here and now, often used in meditation and therapy?

SECTION-B

Very Short Answers

Answer any ten. Each question carries two marks.

(10X2=20)

16. How did Hans Selye define stress, and what did he mean by 'nonspecific response'?
17. What are environmental stressors? Give two examples.
18. Differentiate between primary appraisal and secondary appraisal with examples.
19. How do social stressors impact mental health?
20. What is the 'alarm stage' in General Adaptation Syndrome?
21. What is the role of cortisol in the stress response?
22. Describe how chronic work stress can influence emotional responses like anger.
23. Mention any two physical symptoms commonly associated with stress.
24. What is problem-focused coping?

25. Briefly describe any two healthy coping strategies and explain how they help in managing stress.
26. How can social support help in coping with stress?
27. What is emotion-focused coping? Give an example.
28. What is mindfulness?
29. What is the grounding technique, and how does it help in coping with stress?
30. What are the benefits of yoga walking for managing stress?

SECTION C

Short Answers

Answer any five. Each question carries four marks.

(5X4=20)

31. Define stress and explain how it is both a psychological and physiological experience.
32. Describe the nature of psychological stressors with suitable examples.
33. What are major life changes? Explain their role as environmental stressors.
34. Describe Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) and explain the three stages with examples.
35. What are the physiological effects of chronic stress on the body?
36. Discuss the difference between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies with examples.
37. What is the role of positive thinking in emotional coping?
38. Describe how social support systems can help in coping with prolonged stress.
39. Describe the concept of "yoga walking" and how it contributes to stress relief and resilience.
40. What is resilience? Discuss various ways in which people can build resilience through self-care.



SECTION-D

Essay / Long Answers

Answer any two. Each question carries ten marks. $(2 \times 10 = 20)$

41. Define stress and explain its nature and characteristics. Discuss in detail the various types of stressors—environmental, psychological, and social—with suitable examples. Also, elaborate on the contributions of Selye and Lazarus to the understanding of stress.
42. Discuss the physiological and behavioural responses to stress in detail. Explain the fight-or-flight response, General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), and the role of brain-body interactions in responding to stress. Support your answer with examples.
43. What is coping? Explain the different types of coping strategies, including problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping. Discuss the effectiveness of each type and factors influencing coping style, with real-life illustrations.
44. What is resilience? Explain the concept in detail and discuss various methods for building resilience, including self-care, positive coping strategies, and new-age techniques such as mindfulness, grounding, forest bathing, and yoga walking.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER- SET- B
SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE:

Reg. No :

Name :

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATE (CBCS) DISTANCE MODE EXAMINATIONS
B A PSYCHOLOGY
THIRD SEMESTER
SKILL ENHANCEMENT COURSE
STRESS MANAGEMENT
B23PY01SE
CBCS-UG Regulations
2021- 2024 Admission Onwards

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

SECTION-A

Objective Type Questions

Answer any ten. Each question carries one mark (10X1=10)

1. Who defined stress as “the nonspecific response of the body to any demand”?
2. What type of stress is experienced during positive life events such as getting married, starting a new job, or entering a new college?
3. Which psychologist proposed the transactional model of stress and coping?
4. Who proposed the concept of cognitive appraisal in stress research?
5. What is the first stage in Selye’s G.A.S.?
6. Which nervous system is responsible for calming the body after a stress response?
7. What is the full form of GAS in stress research?
8. Which coping strategy involves consciously evaluating and altering one’s



reaction to stress?

9. What is the term for organizing tasks based on importance and urgency to manage stress better?
10. Which is the initial step in the problem-solving process for coping with stress?
11. Which problem-focused coping strategy involves planning, setting goals, and allocating time effectively to handle stress?
12. Name the Japanese therapeutic practice that enhances resilience by promoting relaxation and emotional balance through mindful connection with nature.
13. Which coping skill enables a person to reduce stress by organizing tasks in order of significance?
14. Which mindfulness-based method helps reduce anxiety and stress by using your five senses to identify 5 things you see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste?
15. What is the full form of the stress reduction program abbreviated as MBSR?

SECTION-B

Very Short Answers

Answer any ten. Each question carries two marks. $(10 \times 2 = 20)$

16. What do you mean by eustress? Support your answer with a suitable example.
17. What are social stressors? Give two examples.
18. What is reappraisal in the context of cognitive stress theory?
19. How does cognitive appraisal influence emotional reactions to stress?
20. What is the fight-or-flight response, and why is it important for survival?
21. Mention two behavioural responses commonly seen under stress.
22. How can chronic stress affect anger and conflict in close relationships?
23. What is prioritization, and how does it support coping with stress?
24. What are the sequential steps involved in the problem-focused coping process?
25. How does time management serve as a problem-focused coping strategy

during stressful times?

26. How can effective coping enhance psychological well-being?
27. Mention two self-care habits that help improve resilience.
28. Name any three personal traits that promote resilience.
29. What is the purpose of deep breathing exercises during stressful situations?
30. What role does social support play in building resilience?

SECTION C

Short Answers

Answer any five. Each question carries four marks.

(5X4=20)

31. Differentiate between eustress and distress. Provide examples to explain how both can affect performance.
32. Explain the characteristics of Type A and Type B personalities with reference to stress vulnerability.
33. Describe the physiological changes that occur in the body during a fight-or-flight response.
34. Explain the role of the HPA axis in the body's response to stress.
35. Discuss the role of the endocrine system in the stress response with reference to key hormones involved.
36. Explain how cognitive-behavioural strategies help in coping with stress. Give at least one example.
37. Discuss the importance of healthy lifestyle practices like exercise and a balanced diet in stress management.
38. Explain how mindfulness helps in building resilience to stress.
39. Describe the concept of "forest bathing" and how it contributes to stress relief and resilience.
40. Explain the role of self-care practices such as exercise, nutrition, and sleep in building resilience.



SECTION-D

Essay /Long Answers

Answer any two. Each question carries ten marks. (2X10=20)

41. Discuss the nature of psychological stress. Explain in detail the classification of stressors and how different individuals may react differently to the same stressor depending on psychological and social factors.
42. Describe the functioning of the autonomic nervous system in the context of stress. Explain the roles of the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems, the HPA axis, and the long-term impact of repeated stress activation on physical and mental health.
43. Explain Lazarus and Folkman's model of coping with stress. Discuss the concepts of primary and secondary appraisal, and provide detailed examples of how individuals apply these in real-life coping situations.
44. What are the key components of building psychological resilience? Discuss how techniques like self-awareness, emotional regulation, grounding, mindfulness, and physical well-being practices contribute to long-term resilience and mental strength.

സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വത്രത്രാക്കണം
വിശ്വപ്പരരായി മാറണം
ഗഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
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സുരൂവായിമിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്വന്നഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവെജയയന്തി പാറണം

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ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജനാനക്കേന്നുമേ ജൂലിക്കണേ

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Stress Management

COURSE CODE: B23PS01SE

A large, stylized logo for SGOU (Sreenarayananaguru Open University) is positioned on the right side of the cover. The letters 'S', 'G', 'O', and 'U' are rendered in a thick, light gray font, with each letter having a smaller, darker gray outline. The letters are arranged in a staggered, flowing manner, with 'S' at the bottom left, 'G' in the middle, 'O' at the top, and 'U' on the far right.

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